

Indiana Land Resources Council Meeting Minutes

Date: July 16, 2002

Location: Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture

Members Present:

John Fernandez
David Hess
Mary McConnell
Riely O'Connor
Sam Smith
Don Strietelmeier

Members Absent:

Bob Guernsey
Eric Kelly
Joe Pearson

OCA Staff:

Joe Tutterrow
Sara Westrick

Executive Director Joe Tutterrow called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Council business was tabled until the afternoon portion of the meeting so that all members attending would be able to participate.

Lynn Newlan, Regional Water & Sewer District Coordinator for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, gave a presentation focusing on sewer and septic districts. There are currently 80 districts in Indiana. Boundaries are set locally and filed by political sub-divisions. User fees generally fund sewer districts. Districts can mandate hook-up if lines is within 300 feet of property. (Handout)

Andrew Pelloso, Senior Environmental Manager for the Department of Environmental Management's Office of Water Quality gave a presentation on Indiana Wetlands. Indiana currently ranks between #6 and #8 in wetland loss in the country. As a point of clarification, size doesn't play a role in the official definition of a wetland. Indiana does not have a current statewide inventory of wetlands, 1986 is the most recent. (Handout)

Jeff Wilson, Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis, gave a PowerPoint presentation titled "Remote Sensing of Land Cover Dynamics in Indiana". It was an update of the statewide land cover conversion assessment that is being completed at the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment. (Handout)

Jamie Palmer, Planner/Research Associate at the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, discussed the next Indiana Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (IACIR) Survey and offered to include additional questions about land use. It will be the 5th survey of its kind. This periodic survey will go to all municipalities with a population greater than 500 and will go out in September. The 2001 survey had a 40% response rate. (Handout, 2001 Survey)

John Ottensman, Professor & Associate Director for the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, gave a presentation about a Growth Model Project that is being developed. This model is currently looking at a 44-county study area in central Indiana.

Council Business

Don Strietelmeier asked that the May minutes be corrected to reflect a motion and second regarding the development of a Farmland Protection Program. After additional discussion, the May minutes were corrected to reflect this motion. Riely O'Connor motioned and Sam Smith seconded the motion to accept the corrected minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Program updates included a discussion about White Papers and led to the following comments and decisions:

Care needs to be taken on the way the papers will be used. The council needs to be sure that they support the papers and that they are accurate and valid. We could add an “editor’s notes” (Council commentary) into the text of papers, where there is disagreement, or have two categories of papers. One category would include papers that the council endorses as valid and fact-based. The 2nd category would take the approach of “Point-Counterpoint” and show two different perspectives.

The Council agreed to table further discussion about Larry DeBoer’s paper “The Fiscal Impact of Development on Indiana Local Governments” until the Builders Association of Greater Indianapolis paper is released. We will then analyze the two perspectives and determine how to proceed.

Sam Smith motioned and Dave Hess seconded the motion to endorse Mark Thornburg’s paper on Conservation Easements and maintain it on the Council’s website. The motion passed unanimously.

Sam Smith motioned and Mary McConnell seconded the motion to endorse Janet Ayer’s paper on Leadership and maintain it on the Council’s website. The motion passed unanimously. Discussion took place about the possibility of brochures or handouts that pull the key points from this paper. These brochures could then be distributed at annual meetings (i.e. Association of IN Counties, IACT, etc.) Joe T. will pursue with Janet.

Legislation

Sara Westrick distributed copies of new land use planning legislation that is being considered in Illinois.

The following ideas will be developed further and discussed at the September Council meeting.

- 1) Farmland Protection – Land Preservation Program (Don Strietelmeier’s proposal)
This could give “more teeth” to the right-to-farm and provide other incentives. It could incorporate existing tools including:
 - Ag. Zoning (property tax relief)
 - Ag. Protection District
 - Ag. Preservation Zone (i.e. Elkhart County)It could also be linked to the new State Farmland Protection Plan that was developed this year in conjunction with the 2002 Farm Bill and the Federal Farmland Protection Program. State funding and other state initiatives could be linked and/or incorporated.
- 2) Eco-terrorism issues.
- 3) State funding to support land use initiatives.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. local time.

Respectfully Submitted:
Joe Tutterrow, Director